



Mr Mark Griffiths
Headteacher

With God, all things are possible.

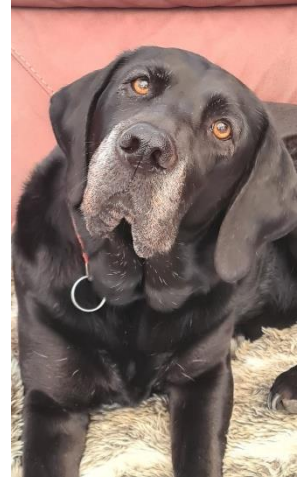
ST. MARGARET'S ANFIELD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Lower Breck Road, Liverpool L6 4BX
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Telephone: 0151 260 5522
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5th September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Introducing Holly - our new school Pet Assisted Therapy (PAT) dog

I am delighted to share the news that we have a new school dog called Holly, a lovely cross breed Labrador/bloodhound, who lives with our strategic school business manager, Ms Whitfield and her family in their home. This is an initiative that many schools, both locally and nationally are currently enjoying. Children in years 1 - 6 will be familiar with our previous dog, lovely Skye who sadly passed away in May this year; they will have completed a form already as part of their induction. All Children who have joined us from September will need to let us know of any allergies or fears by completing the form overleaf.



Safety

Holly is a lovely, calm, kind and even-tempered dog who is also trusting, playful, inquisitive and gentle. She enjoys being around people. A policy and a thorough risk assessment are in place and incorporate all advice from Paws in Nature, trained dog handlers. She will be introduced to the children very gradually and we will continue to teach the children the 'Dog Code Canine Safety' which educates all of the SMA family how to behave safely and positively around Holly.

Insurance

We have public liability insurance for Holly following on from the approved risk assessment. This insurance is specific for Holly and does not include public dogs. This means any other dogs including dogs belonging to children, parents/carers and members of the public are **still not allowed** to be on site.

Reading and Literacy

Many children are naturally comfortable in the presence of dogs, and it has been proven that the special relationship that PAT dogs have with children enhances literacy skills and encourages reading in a relaxed environment, with the dog and child sitting together. The dog acts as a non-judgemental listener and offers comfort to the child who may find reading difficult or stressful, which helps the children grow in confidence. There are around 6000 children across the country who benefit each week from this unique experience.

Well Being and Therapy

It is also proven that petting an animal has a therapeutic and calming effect on all of us and helps to **decrease levels of stress and anxiety** in our bodies.

Please complete the slip overleaf to let us know if your child is allergic to dogs or fearful of dogs at all and return to school by Wednesday 13th September or sooner.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Griffiths
Headteacher

I would like to inform you that my childin Class.....

Has a dog allergy

Is a little fearful of dogs

Info

SignedParent/Carer. Date.....



Truth - Fairness - Justice - Joy



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